

NEWS RELEASE

Wednesday, 06 October 2010

E911 Call Answer Levy Bylaw Moving Forward

The e9-1-1 Call Answer Levy (CAL) Bylaw is intended to require Wireless Service Providers (WSPs) to levy a charge on cell phone accounts to assist funding for 9-1-1 services. This bylaw was scheduled to pass at last Monday's City Council Meeting, but has been set aside pending ongoing consideration with the CVRD, and the RDN, who are both partners in the 9-1-1 Operating System.

The Bylaw is necessary because at present, WSPs are not required under CRTC regulations to participate or provide funding to 9-1-1 Operating Systems, even though they access these services. Cell phones now account for 50 percent of 9-1-1 calls.

The adoption of this bylaw by the 9-1-1 partners will shift the cost of operations from the current property tax method of collecting fees to Wireless Service Providers collecting fees as a universal levy. This method of collecting fees will reduce City of Nanaimo property taxes by \$500,000, and will actually reduce costs to taxpayers who use only a land line. Taxpayers who use both land line and cell services will see minimal difference in annual costs. The objective of the bylaw is to be revenue neutral.

The CVRD is next to visit the bylaw on October 27th.

The new method of collecting the levy will likely take effect early in 2011.

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